

SLUDGERFUND

Fact Sheet

COMMENCEMENT BAY/NEARSHORE TIDEFLATS

Tacoma, Washington



U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

August 2000

EPA has approved the final cleanup plans for contaminated sediments at the Commencement Bay Nearshore/Tideflats Superfund site (CB/NT). We now have final plans for the Hylebos, Thea Foss, and Wheeler-Osgood Waterways and final disposal sites for the contaminated sediments, including Middle Waterway. Source control is complete in the Hylebos and Wheeler-Osgood Waterways, and EPA is moving forward to negotiate agreements for the cleanup of the Hylebos, Thea Foss, and Wheeler-Osgood Waterways this fall.

Final Cleanup Plan and Final Disposal Sites Approved for Commencement Bay Contaminated Sediments

Over 150 acres of contaminated sediments in the Hylebos, Thea Foss, and Wheeler-Osgood Waterways will be cleaned up, including dredging and disposal of up to 1.8 million cubic yards of contaminated sediments from all the Commencement Bay waterways. Forty acres will be allowed to naturally recover. Contaminated sediments will be disposed of in the three disposal sites -- St. Paul nearshore fill, Blair Slip 1, and a permitted upland regional landfill.

The plan also includes design criteria to address:

- Remaining source control issues at the head of Thea Foss Waterway, including stormwater,
- Bay-wide habitat mitigation to address impacts to habitat due to the cleanups,
- Protection of threatened and endangered species, and
- Long-term monitoring to assure protectiveness of the selected remedy.

Source Control Complete in the Hylebos and Wheeler-Osgood Waterways

Source control cleanup actions were recently completed for three of the major problem areas in Commencement Bay -- two on Hylebos Waterway and one on Wheeler-Osgood Waterway. This marks a huge step toward the long-term cleanup of the Commencement Bay Superfund site. This accomplishment means that 67 of the 70 listed sources of contamination in Commencement Bay are under control, and it represents several years of close partnership between EPA and Ecology to control those sources.

Significant Changes Made to EPA's Original Proposal

In response to public comments, several significant changes have been made to EPA's original proposal. EPA has:

- Eliminated the Mouth of Hylebos as an in-water disposal

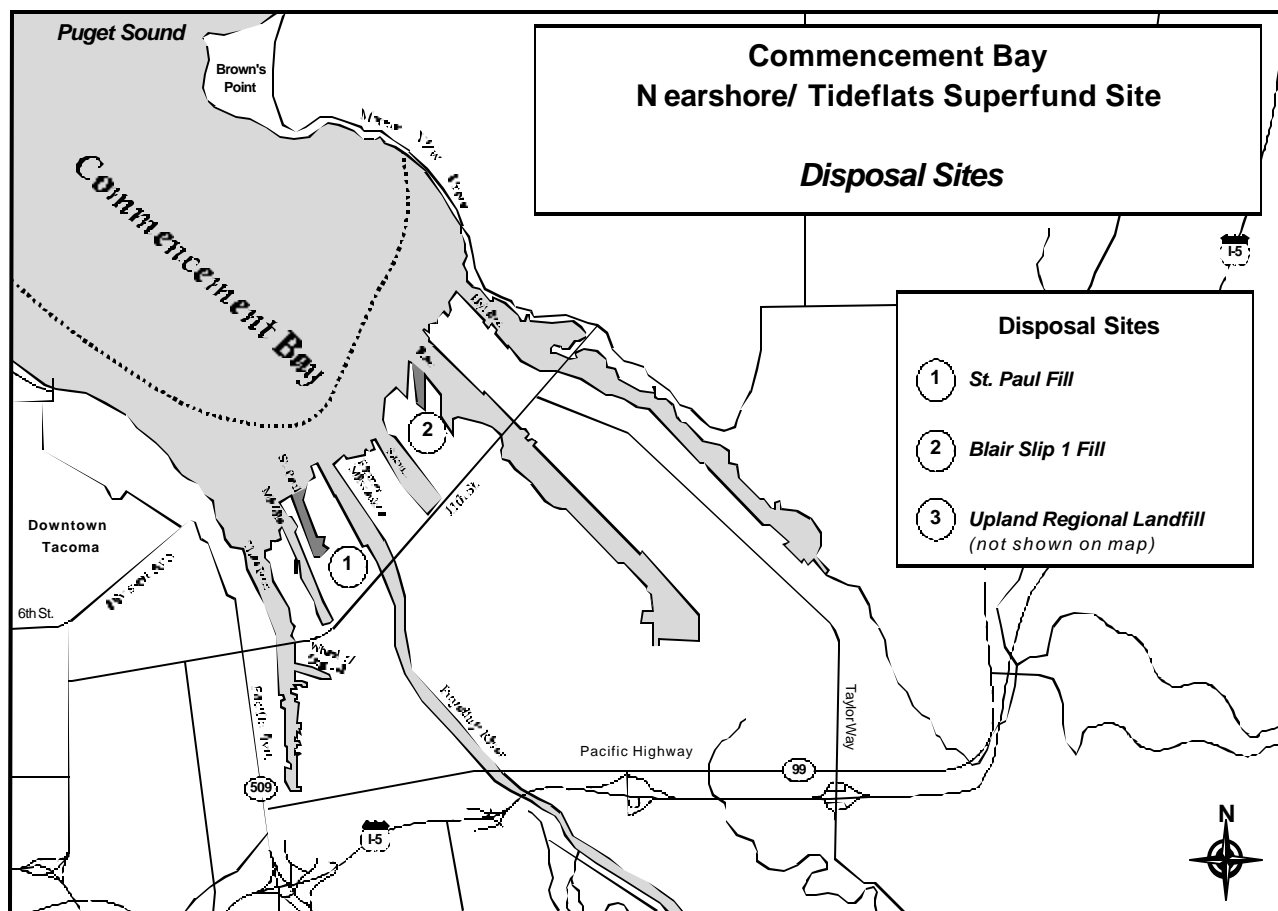
EPA Announces:

- Over 150 Acres of Sediment to be Cleaned up in Commencement Bay
- 1.8 Million Cubic Yards of Sediment to go to 2 Nearshore Fills and an Upland Landfill
- 95% of Source Control Achieved in Commencement Bay
- Record of Decision Signed for Asarco Sediment and Groundwater Cleanup
- Cleanup Plans on Our Web Site at <http://www.epa.gov/r10earth/>

- Selected three disposal sites for dredged contaminated sediments: St. Paul Nearshore Fill, Blair Slip 1, and an Upland Regional Landfill,
- Required Blair Slip 1 and the St. Paul Waterway nearshore fills to be filled to their maximum capacity with contaminated sediment from the Commencement Bay waterways,
- Removed the requirement for a vertical cut-off wall at the western bank of the head of the Thea Foss Waterway because the city determined there was minimal horizontal groundwater flow at this location,
- Required a plan and schedules for additional studies, sampling and analysis, and controls for the stormwater discharging to the Thea Foss Waterway,
- Allowed further consideration of other upland disposal sites within the Commencement Bay Superfund site boundaries during remedial design as a means to lower disposal costs, and
- Identified an overall plan for Commencement Bay habitat restoration, and specified performance criteria to be met for all mitigation plans.

Review of EPA's Final Decision Document

The final decision can be found in a document called an "Explanation of Significant Differences" (ESD), which becomes part of the Record of





Decision. Comments received during the comment period and EPA's responses are also included with the ESD. The document is part of the Administrative Record for the Commencement Bay Nearshore/Tideflats Superfund site and can be reviewed at the information repositories listed in this fact sheet.

Background

For the last several years, EPA has been working closely with the community, other state and federal agencies, the Port of Tacoma, the City of Tacoma, and the business community to develop cleanup plans for the contaminated sediments in Commencement Bay.

In November 1999, EPA proposed cleanup plans for the Hylebos, Thea Foss, and Wheeler-Osgood Waterways, and three disposal sites for dredged contaminated sediment in Commencement Bay -- the St. Paul Waterway, Blair Slip 1, and the Mouth of Hylebos Waterway. A majority of comments received during the public comment period were against the Mouth of the Hylebos in-water disposal site. As a result, a group of four potentially responsible parties for the Hylebos Waterway hired a consulting firm to conduct an additional public outreach process. The purpose of this process was to get the community involved in coming up with a creative solution for the cleanup of the Hylebos Waterway that would address as many of their concerns as possible.

In addition to comments on the Mouth of Hylebos Waterway disposal site, EPA received comments on the cleanup plans for the Hylebos, Thea Foss, and Wheeler-Osgood Waterways and on the other proposed disposal sites. EPA considered all of these comments in the decision-making process before selecting the final cleanup remedies.

Asarco Record of Decision for Sediment and Groundwater Cleanup

The Record of Decision, which is the final cleanup plan for the sediment and groundwater portion of the former Asarco Smelter facility was signed on July 14, 2000. Negotiations on the workplan will begin for this cleanup in the near future to keep the Asarco cleanup moving along as scheduled. Copies of the ROD can be reviewed at the information repositories listed.

Information Repositories

Tacoma Main Public Library*
1102 Tacoma Avenue South
Northwest Room
Tacoma, WA

Citizens for a Healthy Bay
917 Pacific Avenue, Suite 406
Tacoma, WA

Asarco Information Center
5219 N. Shirley, Suite 101
Tacoma, WA (Asarco Sediment and Groundwater Record of Decision ONLY)

U. S. Environmental Protection Agency*
1200 Sixth Avenue
7th Floor Records Center
Seattle, WA

* Indicates official Information Repositories for the Administrative Record

Internet Information

Information for the Commencement Bay Nearshore/Tideflats Superfund site can be found on the Internet. The address is <http://www.epa.gov/r10earth/>, then hit "index" near the bottom of the page, hit "C" for Commencement Bay, hit "Nearshore/Tideflats" under Commencement Bay Superfund Site. Scroll down to Fact Sheets for the latest fact sheet, or scroll to Decision Documents to review the Explanation of Significant Differences (ESD) and EPA's responses to the 180 comment letters received. The Record of Decision for the sediment and groundwater portion of the Former Asarco Smelter Superfund site can also be found under Decision Documents.

For More Information:

If you would like more information, please call:

Allison Hiltner, EPA Project Team Leader, at 206-553-2140

Peter Contreras, EPA Project Manager - Hylebos Waterway, at 206-553-6708

Judith Lee, EPA Project Manager - Thea Foss Waterway, at 206-553-6911

Angela Chung, EPA Project Manager - Middle Waterway, at 206-553-6511

Lee Marshall, EPA Project Manager - Asarco Sediment and Groundwater, at 206-553-2723

Jeanne O'Dell, Community Involvement Coordinator, at 206-553-6919

Or call our toll free number 1-800-424-4372.

To ensure effective communication with everyone, additional services can be made available to persons with disabilities by contacting one of the numbers listed above.



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Environmental Protection
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Tacoma, Washington